

Razzell, W. †

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P.O. Box 875,
Suva, Fiji,
30/9/80.

Dear Josh:

I suppose it's a natural combination of your sensitivity and inherent kindness; in any case your letter was extremely encouraging - very much appreciated. I had spent 8 years in Vancouver tuning a 50-man laboratory in the support of the commercial fishing industry (a \$250-million/yr. business there) when the cost-cutters in Ottawa decided to cut back and let the industry do it themselves. They won't, can't, and didn't; so I left for the job of creating a new international fisheries organisation: a lonely business, albeit fascinating, in which I was the focus of considerable uninformed sniping and my every move second-guessed by a Committee of 12 governments. By April, the political tricks got to me and I just had not the heart to fight off another.

Now that I've rested, I'm not sure I want to take on any large task; perhaps I needed a sabbatical along the way and just kept missing it? Anyhow, if the job at CSIRO comes my way it would appear to serve the same purpose: renew my interest and abilities (I hope!) in lab research and give me time to re-establish my place as a working scientist - which is what I conclude I enjoy most.

Over the years I have needed a physical outlet, too, the best being near the water: snorkeling and sailing. Perhaps it provides a good recuperative milieu to dissipate my fears of failure and allow ideas to sort themselves out.

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For these several reasons, considering my refresher period will be in the N. American winter, probably, I'd prefer to try California. Since writing to you I've written to Bill Rutter in San Francisco, who recently published on the amylase mRNA and is a close colleague; so once I hear from CSIRO I'll get serious. Otherwise, your suggestion of Sobin's lab is good.

For these reasons, too, I hesitate to work into the Barrier Reef organisation: it requires a stretch of my abilities which I don't feel ready to exert again yet. No problem on the "utilisation" side, but a strong feeling that the biologists on the "conservation" side will prove as difficult to cope with as they did in Canada - and run the show to the frustration of everyone else. But of course I'll write to Sir Gustav in Melbourne and see him as soon as I have the chance; it was again thoughtful of you to discuss my interests with him, and I thank you for the information.

I've enclosed a c.v., list of publications, and names of references. Should I be unsuccessful in getting to Australia, I'll just have to sort out the problems of getting Evelyn into the U.S.A. - mostly a matter of delays for her, I think. Because of her - that's important to me, as much as work, I realise - I wouldn't go to Alberta, although I know that Al Patterson's job as Director of the Cancer Research Lab is vacant and they have a good opinion of my ability to do it.

It would obviously be easier on me, or for me, if I were the kind of person to whom work was everything and stressless; I'm not, I now realise, so try to act accordingly.

When I was in Edmonton, I went to the ASNM Meeting in New York ('67) and there Seymour and I had a chat with Lucia (in his suite: President of the Society at the time). It was a warming and satisfying moment, and I expect when I see you again the same will be true. I look forward to that, thank you, wherever we may meet.

I did check at the Fiji School of Medicine on your interest in developments since 1957. It was Mr. Edmonds who started paramedical training. In 1961 the name was changed to Fiji School of Medicine and various paramedical personnel were renamed as time went on (in 1964 "medical officers" was coined to designate those who would have charge of village clinics, for example). In 1975, a Medical Assistant program was introduced. Mr. Pathik, the Registrar (I gather) was the man I spoke to.

It was good of you to send me the issue of "News and Notes" to bring me up to date on your family. I gather you met Marguerite when you were both at Stanford; I'm happy for you, Josh, and wish you continued good fortune.

Finally, I must claim I did recall you had gone East - but after I wrote my letter - since I remember writing you a note at the time (but not to where!). I notice my memory often works in compartments: when accustomed to one, it is often difficult to re-enter another which previously was equally accessible. Then, when the entry is achieved after all, innumerable details become readily accessible again!

Best regards,
Bill